Pre-K Teaching Times

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Studying Social Studies in Pre-K: Feel The Excitement

In This Issue

As stated in the Georgia's Pre-K Program Content Standards, Social Studies in Pre-K is the development of meaningful knowledge about the people, jobs, landmarks, and cultures of the surrounding community. Children also learn how to contribute to the successful functioning of the classroom. They become aware of the similarities and differences among people and how each person is an important member of the community. As children learn about responsibility in the classroom community, they begin building skills needed for participating in a democracy.

Community helpers are a good topic for learning about occupations in the community. Be sure to involve parents of your students by asking them to share their occupations with the class. Field trips to see community helpers in their places of work are the most memorable ways to learn about them, but inviting them to your class is also a wonderful experience for the children.

To help your class develop an appreciation of roles in the community:

- Cut out pictures of community helpers from magazines. Ask each child to dictate a sentence about what type of community helper they would like to be and make into a class book. SS 1 c, LD 6 d
- Match the community helper with the equipment he/she uses regularly; for example, stamp to mailman, stethoscope to doctor, ladder to fireman. SS 1 c

To help your class develop a respect for differences in people:

- Cut out pictures of people from magazines. Discuss differences in hair color, skin color, age, gender, etc. Sort pictures by these differences. SS 2 a, MD 3 e

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Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Studying Social Studies in Pre-K *(Continued)*

If you have parents from other cultures, ask them to share a snack from their country. Taste and graph your favorite. SS 2 b, MD 3 f

Read *How my parents learned to eat* (Friedman). Let children practice picking up cotton balls as pretend food on paper plates. SS 2 b, HPD 2 a

To help your class express beginning geographic thinking:

Take a field trip to businesses in the area or take a walk around the neighborhood to discover the community. When you return to the classroom, use unit blocks, colored masking tape for roads, construction paper, paper tubes, egg cartons, small milk cartons, and boxes to make a simple representation of the neighborhood. SS 3 b, CD 1 c

Look at pictures of several types of structures (homes, schools, businesses, barns, etc.) Sort pictures by type, location, height, etc. SS 3 c, MD 3 c

Ask families to send in vacation pictures. Use push pins to identify the locations on a map. Discuss which locations are near and which are far away. SS 3 c

Ask children to place miniature furniture in the proper rooms in a doll house. SS 3 a

Create a map of your classroom and a small picture of each child. Discuss the locations of your various learning centers...which are near and far. Ask each child to place his/her picture on the center of their choice and tell what activity they want to do there. SS 3 b, SE 1 d

For suggestions of children's books about Social Studies and other domains, go to http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/Content_Standards_Full.pdf. The books are found at the end of each domain. For Georgia's Pre-K Book List, go to http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/BookList.pdf . The concept taught in each book is listed.

More about Social Studies

As you learned last month, Social Studies standards can be seen all around the classroom from staging centers to activities in the child's day-to-day routine. This month we are offering specific Social Studies activities and/or resources. Have fun trying the various activities and watching your students' knowledge about Social Studies expand.

Location of Items in the Environment:
A creative, fun activity to help develop special or geographical thinking involves basic mapping skills. Have the children draw or paint their physical surroundings, i.e., their classroom, playground or neighborhood. As they reproduce their world on paper using paint or crayons, discuss as a group about map direction and how things are represented on their papers. Explain how their drawings stand for actual things and how they relate to one another in their actual surroundings.

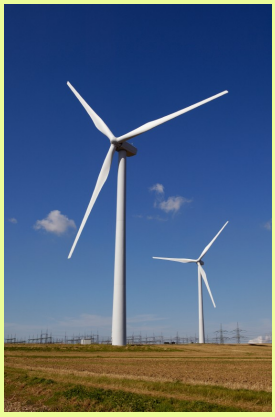
Various Social Studies Activities:
Visit the following link for other Social Studies activities: http://www.pbs.org/teachers/earlychildhood. Also visit our website and find additional ideas for developing activities about Friends at http://www.decal.ga.gov/Prek/Planning.aspx.

Activities for Friendship:
Musical Hugs added 1-26-00, Original Author Unknown
Play music on tape or CD, and encourage children to move the way the music makes them feel. Explain that when the music stops, they should find a friend to hug. Continue with music; stop; hug another friend; etc.

Buddy Painting added 1-26-00, Original Author Unknown
Materials: Easel paper, tape, paint, paint brushes
Directions: Tape two pieces of easel paper together side-by-side and lay them on a table. Have two children work together on a painting. Call them "buddy paintings" because they are painted by two friends. When it is time to send them home, un-tape them and send one half home with each buddy as a reminder of their friendship and sharing.

Books on Friendship:
The Best of Friends by Josephine Haskell
Friends by Helen Heine
Partners by Betty Baker
P.K. Hallinan has many books about friends.
Two is a Team by Lorraine Beim
Every Buddy Counts by Stuart J. Murphy
Shawn Goes to School by Petronella Breinbrug
A Friend Is Someone Who Likes You by Joan Walsh Anglund
That's What Friends Are For by Mary Engelbreit
Do You Want to Be My Friend? by Eric Carle
Three Friends by Robert Fremlin
Ira Sleeps Over by Bernard Wabe
My Buddy by Audrey Oeofsky
My Best Friend by Pat Hutchins

Science



Science Activity

SD 1d: Uses simple equipment to experiment, observe, and increase understanding

Materials:

Book: *When the Wind Stops* by Charlotte Zolotow.
Ziploc bags, strips of paper, fan, wind chime, balloons

Large Group:

Gather children and hold up plastic bag. Ask "What is in the bag?" Wave or blow in the bag and seal it. Ask again. "Does it look or feel different from a flat bag? Why?" Explain concept of air. "Can we see air? Feel air? Taste or hear it?" Read *When the Wind Stops* and talk about air as wind. "Can we make wind in the classroom? How?" Do the same demonstration with a balloon.

Small Group:

Provide scraps of paper, foil, tissue, cardboard, plastic, and a straw. Turn on a fan. Allow children to observe the effects on paper strips, their hair, wind chimes, and flags. Supervise carefully and discuss.

Learning Centers:

Art: Provide straws, paint, and paper for "blow art."
Movement: Provide streamers and light woodwind music to dance by.

Outside Science Activity: Provide bubbles and wands for play. What happens if there is no air movement? Too much air movement?

Math

A quality early childhood mathematics program builds upon young children's insatiable curiosity and naturally integrates mathematics instruction into the entire instructional day. Pre-K students deserve a rich mathematics learning environment that is developmentally appropriate and fun for them. Four year olds love to stomp, wiggle, giggle, and sing as they count to one hundred; go on a shape hunt in their classroom; measure with nonstandard units; and create patterns with many, varied materials.

A clear understanding of math concepts and skills is important in preparing Pre-K students for success in an elementary school math program; however, drilling them in mathematics problems using worksheets and flash cards is not the answer. Young children more easily learn and remember mathematics concepts when they are taught using math manipulatives. Hands-on learning helps keep young students' attention as they naturally play with and explore objects. Children benefit when they touch and move materials as they learn new concepts before they are expected to understand the same ideas with symbols.

When using manipulatives, follow the guidelines below for the most effective math instruction:

- Introduce math materials gradually. Although it is tempting to make all of the math manipulatives accessible and ready to use at the beginning of the year, it is better to put only some of the math materials out to begin with and introduce them to your students gradually.
- Let children play with the manipulatives for a week or two before using them in a structured learning activity. During this exploration time, sit with the children and add to their vocabulary as they play with the materials by say things like, "Look, you can roll the cylinders and sphere shapes easily, but not the cubes."
- Make sure each child has enough space to work. Individual plastic table mats or pieces of plain white cardstock spread out in a circle on the carpet work well.
- Encourage children to talk about what they are doing. Ask questions like, "How did you do that?" "What were you thinking?" "Why did you put this here?" Letting children talk aloud about what they are learning and doing helps "cement" their learning and gives you the opportunity to assess their knowledge to that point.
- Don't forget to keep it fun...we want to build a lifelong love of mathematics!

SYLLABLE AWARENESS - the ability to hear parts or segments of phonemes that comprise the rhythm of the word.

Explicit syllable segmentation is easier than phonemic segmentation; sounds do not occur in isolation in words but rather are "co-articulated," meaning that the acoustic properties of one sound influence how the surrounding phonemes in the words will sound. Teaching a student to segment words by syllables is a relatively easy task for most students and it provides an opportunity for students to practice dividing the whole into its parts as a precursor to more difficult phonemic segmentation of word tasks.

Syllable Awareness Activities

1. Compound Word Segmentation- Syllable segmentation activities are easiest when using compound words. For this activity you will need pictures representing the two words that make up a compound word. Ask students to create new words with two of the pictures. Although they may have fun seeing what kind of silly words they can come up with, encourage them to create real compound words.

2. Compound Word Deletion Activity - Show two pictures representing the two parts of a compound word. Take one part away and ask what word is left. Give other compound words without pictures after students have successfully performed the task with the pictures.

3. Syllable Search - Have students find things around the room with a certain number of syllables (for example, two-syllable words like window, pencil, teacher, etc.). Check to see if the child has chosen a word with the correct number of syllables by clapping the syllables or putting a magnetic shape on the board to represent each syllable.

4. Syllable Categories - Place a number of objects on the table. Identify how many syllables are in the word that names each object. Categorize the objects by the number of syllables.

5. Count Syllables - Spontaneously stop and ask how many syllables comprise a word. A student with phonological awareness difficulties may need manipulatives to provide a visual "handle." This practice with manipulatives serves as a precursor for the more difficult task of phoneme manipulation.

6. Syllable Response Cards - Print the number "1" on one side of an index card, "2" on the other side; "3" and "4" on a second card. As you pronounce multi-syllabic words, students hold up a number indicating how many syllables they hear.

7. Syllables with Manipulatives - Using blocks, pennies or plastic chips, students indicate the number of syllables they hear in a word. Or using square grids, students listen to a word and point to the number of squares, placing one chip or block on the table for each syllable heard.

8. Syllable Identification - Ask students whether a given syllable is in a certain word (e.g., "Is *dog* in doghouse?")

9. Syllable Addition - Ask students to add a prefix or suffix to a word (e.g., add *-ing* to the end of run). Increasing the complexity of the words (e.g., photo, photograph, photographer, photography, photographic" can facilitate phonological maturity).

10. Substitution of Syllables - Ask students to replace part of a word (e.g., housefly "Now say 'boat' instead of fly" -- houseboat).

11. Rotating Syllables in Compound Words - Ask students to reverse the two parts of a word (e.g., "mailbox" becomes "boxmail").

Teaching Students Who are English Language Learners (ELL)

What a challenge to engage students who are non-English speakers, but research reveals that, while it is a challenge, it is also rewarding. The earlier that students are exposed to other languages, the faster they will learn. Below are tips that teachers should keep in mind when teaching English language learners.

- Teachers must identify student's strengths and knowledge in their native language. Students who have learned to speak and listen in their first language seem to be more equipped to develop understanding in a second language.

- Creating a student-centered environment will assist the language development of all students. Environmental print is great for all learners.

- Immerse students with the English language through story picture books, songs, familiar games. Through interactive learning and imitation, students will absorb language faster.

- When speaking with students, make sure that you speak clearly and concisely. Speaking louder, however, is not the answer!!!!!

- Even though you are encouraging students to speak English, you don't want them to lose their native language. It is important for students to retain their first language.

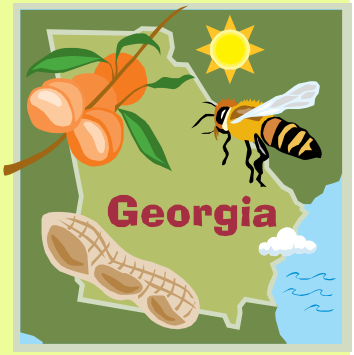
- Encourage students to share their native language and culture with the class.

Resources:

Teaching English As a Second Language to Young Children | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/way_5297493_teaching-second-language-young-children.html#ixzz1CeD0bR9T

How to Teach English to 3 - 6 Year Olds | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/how_6059446_teach-3-6-year-olds.html#ixzz1CeDRjubt

CLASS



Georgia's Pre-K Program continues to implement the CLASS in multiple classrooms across the state. The next classroom could be yours. This month we are spotlighting the first CLASS dimension, Concept Development, included under the Instructional Support domain.

Concept Development focuses on the ways a teacher makes learning conceptual and facilitates children's broader understanding of concepts and ideas.

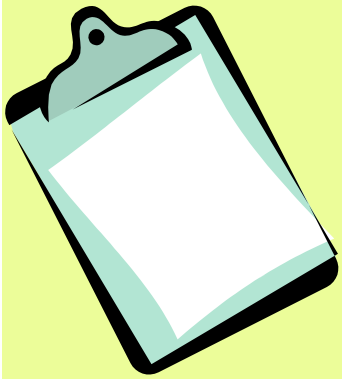
Under this dimension teachers implement higher order thinking skills rather than focusing on recall and rote instruction. The indicators included are Analysis and Reasoning, Creating, Integration, and Connections to the Real World. Students learn more by using analytical thinking skills and problem solving. In these classrooms teachers provide students with opportunities to be creative, generate their own ideas and concepts, make predictions, problem solve, build upon prior knowledge, and relate to students' lives.

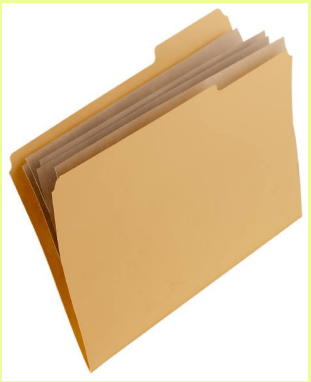
Teachers at the high end of concept development focus on understanding concepts and promote the exploration of these concepts. These teachers encourage students to think about the hows and whys of learning through open-ended and thought provoking questions. Students are given many opportunities to problem solve, make predictions, and brainstorm. Teachers should also link concepts across activities and relate them back to the real world. For example, if the teacher is discussing sequencing, the students may share the steps to washing hands.

Teachers should also take time to plan for concept development. While preparing lesson plans, think of questions to ask students that will stimulate high order thinking and a deeper understanding of the concept. Finally, encourage children's creativity through brainstorming and planning.

Continue to look for more exciting news about CLASS each month. To learn more about CLASS, visit www.classobservation.com.

CLASS Feedback: Our office is currently working with Teachstone and another group to develop the report that will be shared with teachers. We are working to enter the data collected thus far to be able to share a state average for the CLASS along with the national averages. Just know, results will be delivered in the late Spring. We appreciate your patience as we work through this process.





Assessment

During weeks 7 – 11 of spring semester, if you are using WSS, you should be observing, recording observational notes and matrices, taking photos, collecting work samples, and filing weekly. Ensure that photos include descriptors and that all notes, photos, and work samples are labeled with the child's name, date, and related domain. The matrices should be labeled with name, date, related domains, and predictable skills and/or behaviors.

WSO teachers should continue to observe and briefly record observational notes, collect work samples, take photos, and complete matrices a minimum of once a week. Classify these at all three levels – domain, functional component, and indicator. Ensure matrices are labeled with name, date, related domain, and predictable skills and/or behaviors.

During week 12, review the portfolios, matrices, and documentation to assign ratings for indicators based on the supporting documentation. Regardless of whether you use WSS or WSO, ensure a balance of documentation and use of matrices throughout a child's portfolio.

Use pencil to mark the WSS Spreadsheet or Developmental Checklist. Online users should rate the WSS Developmental Checklist; print the Class Ratings or Class Profile Report; and file it in your teacher file. Be sure to update the IQ Guide through week 12. Directors are responsible for ensuring that teachers are gathering documentation, recording ratings, and that portfolios contain current documentation.

Questions from WSO teachers:
Q: Can I scan my work samples and enter them as a note?

A: This is a teacher choice. Teachers can choose to upload work samples by scanning and treating them like a photo and then coding them or they can enter them as a note and code them … or they can leave them as authentic work samples and not code them in WSO. However, we recommend one of the two other options. If teachers scan them, can they then choose to send them home or should they keep them? We recommend keeping a few samples to use for parent conferences. If entered as notes, keep the samples onsite.

Q: Should we be putting the matrices online?

A: This too is teacher preference. During training, facilitators modeled how to enter matrices online, but it is not required. We recommend entering them because they can be coded online, and teachers will have access to the information when they complete the checklists.

Important Information

Bright from the Start is pleased to announce that the 2010-2011 Georgia's Pre-K Directors Online Access Course is now available for online registration. This course provides directors of Georgia's Pre-K programs access to Best Practices Online Learning Modules and Podcasts.

To register for this course, go to the Bright from the Start Training Registration home page at: http://www.decal.ga.gov/trainingregistration and log in using your PANDA username and password.

Follow the procedure that you customarily use to register yourself and your teachers for Pre-K training. Under "2010-2011 Training Selections," press the first blue-colored ENROLL button (enroll for a Single Course or Multiple Courses) where you will find this course listed as "GA's Pre-K Directors Online Access."

Once you have selected this course, entered all data on the "Enrollment Certify" page, and received a confirmation number, the registration process is complete. Almost immediately, Bright from the Start will send a registration confirmation to the e-mail addresses listed in the registration. NOTE: you will not have instant access to the online courses and podcasts. In approximately 3-4 business days, Best Practices will e-mail you the username and password required to access the online courses.

If you have any questions about the registration procedure, or if this is your first time using the Bright from the Start Training Registration System and you need additional guidance, call the Bright from the Start Training Registration Center at 404-463-4109.

Call the Pre-K consultant on duty at the BFTS office at 404-656-5957. Pre-K consultant contact information also can be found at www.decal.ga.gov .